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STATE FOR WHA/CAN, SCA/A, AND EUR/RPM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/18/2019  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [NATO](#) [EAID](#) [AF](#) [PK](#) [CA](#)  
SUBJECT: INITIAL CANADIAN RESPONSE TO U.S.  
AFGHANISTAN/PAKISTAN POLICY REVIEW

REF: A. STATE 14097  
[1](#)B. STATE 15623

Classified By: PolMinCouns Scott Bellard, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary and comment: Canada welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the U.S. Afghanistan/Pakistan policy review and has provided initial thinking in a non-paper (see para 5). Canada believes strongly that the reconstruction and development process must be Afghan-led and that strong and accountable government at all levels is essential. Canada may seek a focus on a "shared regional strategy" for Afghanistan and Pakistan during its 2010 G8 Presidency. On the heels of President Obama's February 19 discussions with Prime Minister Stephen Harper regarding Afghanistan and other topics, the February 23 meeting in Washington between Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs David Mulroney and Special Representative Holbrooke will be a timely opportunity to exchange views and to stimulate even closer U.S.-Canadian civil and military collaboration in Kandahar. End summary and comment.

[1](#)2. (C) In response to reftel points on the Administration's comprehensive review of U.S. national security interests and strategy in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) Afghanistan Task Force (FTAG) Deputy Director for Policy and Advocacy Christopher Gibbins on February 20 provided a Canadian non-paper, which he described as a preview of some of the points Deputy Minister Mulroney probably will raise during his meetings in Washington on February 23.

[1](#)3. (C) Gibbins added that Mulroney would be especially keen to hear U.S. thinking on how to tackle the problem of President Karzai's "inability to deliver, and to reform his incompetent and corrupt government." He noted that, while reftels did not mention other regional players like Iran, India, Russia, and China, Mulroney probably would want to talk about an even broader regional approach to the problems in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Gibbins sought confirmation that Special Representative Holbrooke would lead the U.S. delegation to the Pakistan Donors' Conference. Canada would determine who should lead its team after the U.S. names its head of delegation, he remarked.

[1](#)4. (C) Gibbins offered that DFAIT would be willing to send working-level subject matter expert visits to Washington to consult with their U.S. counterparts on elements of the comprehensive review to follow up on the Mulroney talks,

ideally well in advance of the mid-March due date.

15. (C) BEGIN CANADIAN NON-PAPER.

Response to Informal Invitation for Input into US Review Process

-A- Key Issues:

The reconstruction and development process must be Afghan led and must be factored in as strategies are developed.

Strong and accountable government at all levels is necessary for Afghans to believe in democracy and a central government.

Corruption is a major threat to this process, possibly greater than that of security.

Strong local governance structures will be instrumental in engaging Afghans in their reconstruction process. For these local structures to be sustainable, they must be tied to the local structures to be sustainable, they must be tied to the development of strong national institutions.

Building the capacity of the Afghan National Security Forces will continue to be an important component of any transition strategy. Canada is committed to building ANA and ANP capacity.

Speaking to the Government of Afghanistan with one voice is critical. This can be done bilaterally with a fully integrated whole-of-government approach, and internationally

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through strong coordination and information sharing between partners.

-B- Canada's Review Process:

In 2008, Canada undertook a thorough review of its engagement in Afghanistan.

Through that process we identified six priority areas with clear objectives to 2011 for each. As a consequence, our efforts have been more focused and more effective.

Reports documenting the progress, and setbacks, on these priority areas are presented to Parliament and the public on a quarterly basis.

In establishing priorities for engagement in Afghanistan, it is important that goals and targets are realistic.

-C- Regional Strategy:

Canada fully agrees with the need for an integrated regional strategy.

This approach is reflected in one of our six priorities in Afghanistan - strengthening border management and building dialogue between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

At the same time, we are developing an engagement strategy with Pakistan with a desire to see Pakistan as part of the solution to the regional crisis.

We look forward to engaging with the US about its thinking on Pakistan and the region. A common approach to Pakistan by the international community is required.

Canada's G8 2010 Presidency could provide a platform for a shared regional strategy.

Meaningful change in Pakistan will only come about if critical socio-economic development and education projects are supported, corruption is addressed and a strong justice

sector is built.

-D- Engaging the Coalition:

Canada and the US have worked very closely to coordinate our engagement in Afghanistan - with very positive results. For example, having US civilian and military personnel integrated into Canadian structures in Kandahar has greatly facilitated coordination in theatre.

This is a model which bears consideration as the US increases its military and civilian presence elsewhere in Afghanistan.

We welcome continued dialogue, particularly in theatre to continue to define and implement collaboration opportunities.

Strong cooperative relationships between Coalition partners will enable all actors to further a common set of strategic interests in Afghanistan.

END CANADIAN NON-PAPER

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